

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on February 16, 2011, (the "Office Action"). By this Reply, Applicant amends claims 55, 56, and 58-77. Support for the amended claims can be found in the originally-filed application, including the as-filed specification, claims, and drawings. No new matter has been added. Claims 55, 56, and 58-77, of which claims 55 and 56 are independent, remain pending in this application.

I. Claim Objections

In the Office Action, claims 58-77 were objected for an alleged informality. In particular, the Office Action asserts that in each claim, the phrase "A support arrangement" should be replaced with --The support arrangement--. See Office Action, p. 2. While not conceding the propriety of these objections, Applicant has amended the claims as suggested by the Examiner, thereby rendering the objections moot.

In the Office Action, claim 55 was objected to for an alleged informality. In particular, the Office Action asserts that the phrase "the roller" should be replaced with --the roller element--. See Office Action, p. 3. While not conceding the propriety of this objection, Applicant has amended the claim as suggested by the Examiner, thereby rendering the objection moot.

In the Office Action, claim 56 was objected to for an alleged informality. In particular, the Office Action asserts that the phrase "the outer upper lateral support is" should be replaced with --the outer upper lateral support members are--. See *id.* Noting

that the proper antecedent basis for this claim feature is singular (i.e., “each outer upper lateral support member is”), Applicant has amended the claim to state “the outer upper lateral support member is.” Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the objection to claim 56 has been rendered moot and should be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claim 67 was objected to for an alleged informality. In particular, the Office Action asserts that the phrase “mounted on upper support ring” should be replaced with --mounted on an upper support ring--. While not conceding the propriety of this objection, Applicant has amended the claim as suggested by the Examiner, thereby rendering the objection moot.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

- ***Claims 69-71***

In the Office Action, claims 69-71 were rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Office Action alleges that “[t]he lateral support means, as construed from the specification, is, - and can only be, element 18, but it is not disclosed to include (itself) . . . a plurality of circumferentially spaced lower lateral supports.” See *id.* As such, the Office Action contends that claim 69-71 contain new matter. See *id.*

Additionally, the Office Actions states that as a result of the introduction of the alleged new matter, claims 69-71 are indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as its invention. As such, the Office Action

further rejects claims 69-71 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. See Office Action, p. 5.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 69-71. Indeed, Applicant submits that each of claims 69-71 is fully supported by the original application, and thus, no new matter has been added. In particular, support may be found in at least, for example, p. 17, ll. 8-10 of the specification which states that “the lateral support means includes a lower lateral support comprising three elastically deformable locating elements or beams 312.” Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claims 69-71 under 35 USC §112, first and second paragraphs.

- ***Claims 73 and 74***

In the Office Action, claims 73 and 74 were rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Examiner alleges that “[t]he limitation in claim 73 that the ‘radial outer ends of the support beams are receivable with little clearance’ . . . is not supported by the specification.” See Office Action, p. 4. In addition, the Office Action alleges that that “[n]o statement on clearance is included at all with regard to said radial outer ends, let alone on ‘little’ clearance.” See *id.* As such, the Office Action contends that claims 73 and 74 contain new matter. See *id.*

Additionally, the Office Action states that as a result of the introduction of the alleged new matter, claims 73 and 74 are indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as its invention. As such, the Office Action also rejects claims 73 and 74 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. See Office

Action, p. 5. Further, the Office Action rejects claims 73 and 74 on the basis that the term “little” is a relative term which allegedly renders the claims indefinite. *See id.*

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 73 and 74. As noted above, claim 73 has been amended such that the phrase “with little clearance” has been replaced by the phrase “with clearance.” Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that, contrary to the Office Action’s allegation, the specification does disclose a clearance with regard to the radial outer ends. Indeed, support for such a claim feature may be found in, for example, at least Figs. 3 and 4, and p. 12, l. 30-p. 13, l. 4 of the specification. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claims 73 and 74 under 35 USC §112, first and second paragraphs.

- **Claim 75**

In the Office Action, claim 75 was rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Office Action alleges the the “‘plurality of spaced support beams’ (54) claimed as included in the ‘upper support member’ (44) are not disclosed, in the specification, to extend radially outwardly from the central member to an annular skirt (302).” *See Office Action*, p. 4. Moreover, the Office Action alleges that such an arrangement is disclosed for the lower support member 46 rather than upper support member 44. As such, the Office Action contends that claim 75 contains new matter. *See id.*

Further, the Office Action states that as a result of the introduction of the new matter, the claims are indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject

matter which Applicant regards as its invention. As such, the Office Action further rejects claim 75 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. See Office Action, p. 5.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claim 75. Indeed, Applicant submits that claim 75 is fully supported by the original application, and thus, no new matter has been added. In particular, support may be found in at least, for example, Fig. 14 and p. 16, ll. 20-23 of the specification which states that “[t]he support beams 54 are connected to . . . the central member 48 and extend radially outwardly therefrom, the radially outer ends of the support beams 54 being connected to the skirt 302.”

Additionally, in relation to the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 14, no specific mention is made in the specification to the lower support member 46. However, the specification states, on p. 16, ll. 16 and 17, that unless otherwise indicated, the same reference numerals used above are used to designate similar parts, and Fig. 14 includes reference numeral 46. The previous embodiment illustrated in Fig. 2 and described in the body of the specification on p. 8, l. 16-p. 9, l. 6 also includes an upper support member 44 and a lower support member 46 (which is bolted to the reactor pressure vessel), the upper support member 44 including a central member 48 and a plurality of angularly spaced support beams 54, with the support beams 54 being connected to the central member 48 and with the support beams 54 and the central member 48 being displaceable relative to the lower support member 46 (p. 9, ll. 17-20). As in the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 2, the member 46 in the embodiment shown in Fig. 14 is discrete from the central member 48, with the central member 48 being located above the lower support member 46. The Examiner correctly describes member 46 as being

the “lower” support member and, as is the case in the embodiment shown in Fig. 2, it is the “lower” support member precisely because it is located below the upper support member 44 comprising the support beams 54 and the central member 48 (p. 16, ll. 21-23 of the specification). Fig. 14 shows that both the support members 54 and the beams 312 are connected to the central member 48, with the specification further stating that inner end portions of the beams 312 are located in inner receiving formations in the form of recesses 314 provided on the “upper support member” 48 (p. 17, ll. 10-12). Further, from a functional point of view (and similarly to the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 2), the support beams 54 and the central member 48 must be displaceable relative to the lower support member 46, in order for the lower auxiliary support 130 and the lower lateral support comprising the beams 312 to support the core barrel 14 by transmitting loads from the core barrel 14 to the reactor pressure vessel (see p. 16, l. 28-p. 17, l. 6; and p. 17, ll. 8-22).

As indicated above, Applicant has also amended claim 75 to replace the phrase “with little clearance” with the phrase “with clearance.” Moreover, claim 75 has been amended to replace the term “extend” with the term “extends.” Support for the amendment of claim 75 can be found on p. 16, l. 25-p. 17, l. 6; and p. 17, ll. 15-22 read in conjunction with Figs. 14, 15 and 16. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claim 75 under 35 USC §112, first and second paragraphs.

- ***Claim 76***

In the Office Action, claim 76 was rejected under 35 USC §112 first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Office Action alleges that “[t]he limitation in claim 76 that the ‘radial outer ends of the support beams . . . are receivable with little clearance’ . . . is not supported by the specification.” See Office Action, pp. 4 and 5. In addition, the Office Action alleges that that “[n]o statement on clearance is included at all with regard to said radial outer ends, let alone on ‘little’ clearance.” See *id.* As such, the Office Action contends that claim 76 contains new matter. See *id.*

Additionally, the Office Action states that as a result of the introduction of the alleged new matter, claim 76 is indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as its invention. As such, the Office Action also rejects claim 76 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. See Office Action, p. 5. Further, the Office Action rejects claims 73 and 74 on the basis that the term “little” is a relative term which allegedly renders the claims indefinite. See *id.*

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claim 76. Applicant points out that claim 76 does not include the limitation that the “radial outer ends of the support beams . . . are receivable with little clearance” as alleged by the Examiner. As indicated above, however, Applicant has nonetheless amended claim 76 to read that the end portions of the ribs are receivable within the slots of the radially inner surface of the upper support ring “with clearance” instead of “with little clearance.” Support for the amendments to claim 76 may be found, at least on p. 12, ll. 23-28; p. 12, l. 30 – p. 13, l. 4; and Fig. 11.

The Office Action also has rejected claim 76 on the basis that the limitation “the upper support ring” allegedly lacks antecedent basis. By this Reply, claim 76 has been amended so that the term “the upper support ring” is replaced with “an upper support ring.” Support for this amendment can be found in the drawings and on p. 12, ll. 23-28 of the specification. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claim 76.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. By this Reply, Applicant submits that the remaining objections and rejection of the pending claims have been overcome and respectfully requests the allowance of claims 55, 56, and 58-77.

IV. Conclusion

The Office Action may contain characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicant does not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicant declines to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

In discussing the specification and claims in this Reply, it is to be understood that Applicant is in no way intending to limit the scope of the claims to any exemplary embodiments described in the specification and/or shown in the drawings. Rather, Applicant is entitled to have the claims interpreted broadly, to the maximum extent permitted by statute, regulation, and applicable case law.

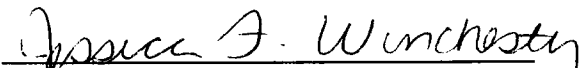
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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